

Executive Summary

Dr. Rebecca Gill (the Complainant) was a student in the Inter-University Consortium for Political and Social Research Summer Program (ICPSR) in 2002. In 2018, the University first learned of the Complainant's allegations that she experienced sexual harassment by an instructor in ICPSR, Dr. William Jacoby (the Respondent). While speaking at the Southern Political Science Association (SPSA) Annual Meeting, the Complainant described her concerns regarding the Respondent, and although she did not identify him by name at the time, other individuals affiliated with the University were able to identify him and OIE was informed of the matter. I subsequently spoke with the Complainant regarding her concerns.

The Complainant described the following to OIE:

- Toward the end of the 2002 summer session in which she was enrolled in the Respondent's course in ICPSR, the Respondent told her, "I remember from the first time I saw you, you were so mysterious." The parties were at a bar at the time.
- The Respondent then asked the Complainant, "Would you consider having an affair with me?"

After interviewing the Respondent and others, as well as document review, I determined the following:

- The Respondent denies making the alleged comments.
- Witness 5 overheard the Respondent ask the Complainant about having an affair with him.
- The conversation occurred during the last week of the session, and before grades were assigned.
- Both parties were aware that the Complainant was a student at Michigan State University (MSU) and that the Respondent, who at that time was a faculty member at the University of South Carolina, would be joining the MSU faculty a year later.¹

The preponderance of the evidence supports the conclusion that the Respondent asked the Complainant to consider having an affair with him while she was his student. Respondent's action, although it occurred once, was sufficient to have created a hostile environment for the Complainant in violation of the Policy.

¹ MSU is also aware of the Complainant's concerns and also informed UM's OIE of the allegations related to ICPSR.